

Treatment for Methamphetamine Dependency is as Effective as Treatment for Any Other Drug

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Introduction: For publicly funded substance abuse treatment clients, are the outcomes for methamphetamine¹ users different from those of clients using other substances? This report addresses this question using data from the federally funded TOPPS 2 grant to the Washington State Division of Alcohol and Substance Abuse, Department of Social and Health Services. TOPPS 2 was a study examining outcomes of treatment for clients in 1995 and 1997².

Methamphetamine Use in the TOPPS 2 Study Population

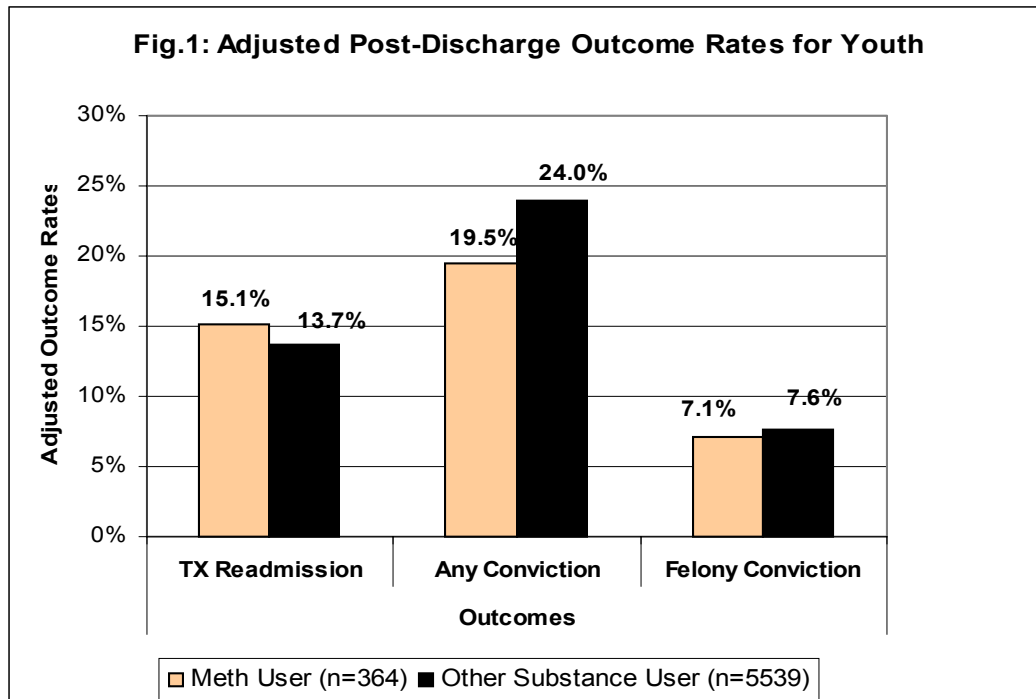
Methamphetamines were the third most commonly used substance among both adults and youth entering treatment. 11% of all adults and 6% of youth in the TOPPS study reported that methamphetamines were their primary substance.

Primary Drug for Youth and Adults

Primary Substance	Adult		Youth	
	N	%	N	%
Methamphetamine	1139	11%	364	6%
Alcohol	5893	57%	1600	27%
Marijuana	990	10%	3643	62%
Heroin/Cocaine	2087	20%	167	3%
Other	175	2%	129	2%
TOTAL	10284	100%	5903	100%

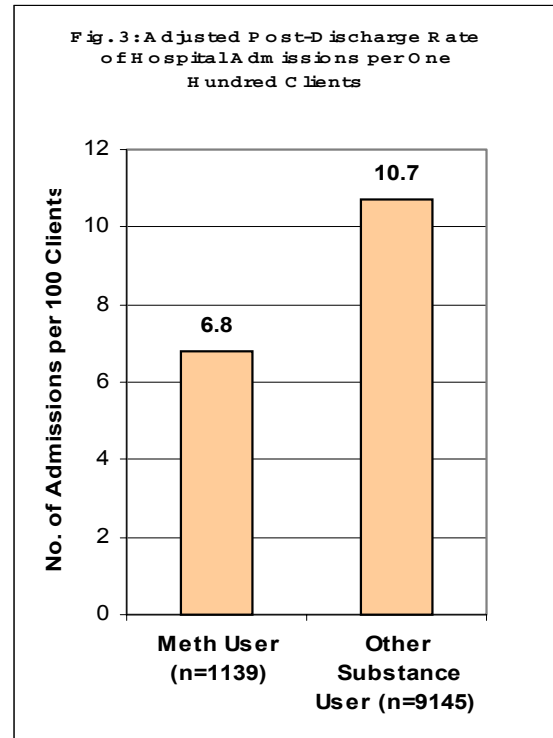
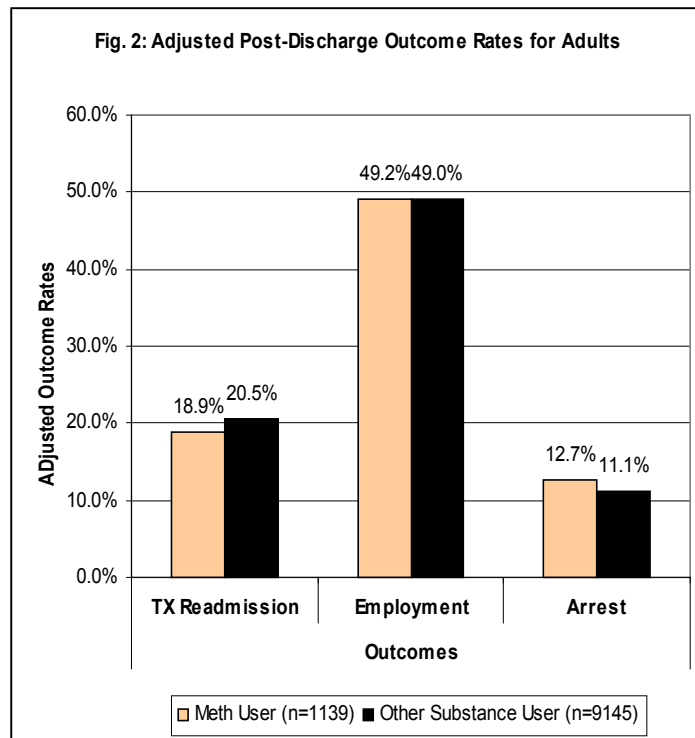
Results for youth in the year following treatment discharge: Figure 1 shows the results of three different outcomes³ for youth. While arrests were used as an outcome for adults, convictions were used for youth. The key findings include⁴:

- Among Youth, No Statistically Significant Differences in Outcomes between Methamphetamine Users and Users of Other Substances



Results for adults in the year following treatment discharge: Figures 2&3 show the results of the analysis of four different outcomes⁵ for adults in the year following treatment. Key findings include:

- **Among Adults, No Statistically Significant Differences in Outcomes between Methamphetamine Users and Users of Other Substances, except for Hospital Admissions:** Methamphetamine users had fewer inpatient hospital admissions in the year following treatment than users of other substances.



Conclusion: In the TOPPS study population, for both youth and adults, there were no statistically significant differences across a series of outcomes between clients using methamphetamines and those using other substances. The only exception to that general finding pertained to admissions to inpatient hospitals, where methamphetamine users had fewer post-discharge admissions than users of other substances.

References

- Luchansky B, He L, Krupski A and Stark K. 2000. Predicting readmission to substance abuse treatment using state information systems: The impact of client and treatment characteristics. *Journal of Substance Abuse* 12: 255-270.
- Luchansky B and He L. 2002. Employment outcomes of chemical dependency treatment: Analyses from Washington State. Olympia, WA: Department of Social and Health Services, Division of Research and Data Analysis.

¹ Clients were classified as methamphetamine users if they reported that their primary substance was either methamphetamines, amphetamines or other stimulants.

² The TOPPS 2 Project (Treatment Outcomes Prospective Pilot Study Enhancement) was funded by Grant #1 UR1 TI11481-03 from the Center for Substance Abuse Treatment, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, Department of Health and Human Services.

³ The followup period for each outcome was the year following the end of the index episode. Outcomes are defined as follows: 1) TX readmission: any readmission to treatment in the followup period, 2) Any Conviction: a conviction for any criminal charge, in either juvenile or adult courts in Washington State, in the followup period, 3) Felony Conviction: a conviction on a felony charge in any Washington State court in the followup period, 4) Arrest: any record of arrest in the followup period 5) Employment: any record of employment in the followup period, 6) Hospital Admission: any admission to an acute care medical hospital in the followup period.

⁴ Findings for both youth and adults were based on logistic regressions that statistically controlled for the following factors: age, ethnicity, gender and prior treatment.

⁵ Treatment readmission data came from Washington State Division of Alcohol and Substance Abuse; employment data came from the Washington State Employment Security Department; arrest data came from the Washington State Patrol; conviction data came from the Washington State Administrative Office for the Courts; hospital admission data came from the Washington State Department of Health. For adults, in the employment and arrest analyses, we determined that there were no pre-treatment differences in those outcomes.